



**U.S. Department of Justice**

**Thomas Scott Woodward**  
*United States Attorney*  
*Northern District of Oklahoma*

*110 West Seventh Street, Suite 300*  
*Tulsa, Oklahoma 74119*

*(918) 382-2700*  
*Fax (918) 560-7938*

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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Tulsa, Oklahoma

Contact: Randal Edgmon

### **Two Tulsa Pharmacies Penalized for Missing Prescription Drugs**

U.S. Attorney Thomas Scott Woodward announced today that Cardinal Health Pharmacy Services, LLC, a company engaged in providing hospital pharmacy management services, has agreed to pay a civil penalty in the amount of \$1 million for failing to account for large amounts of missing prescription drugs.

Cardinal Health Pharmacy Services, LLC, has agreed to pay the civil penalty to settle allegations by the government that two pharmacies that it operates in Tulsa, Hillcrest Medical Center Pharmacy (HMCP) and Oklahoma State University Medical Center Pharmacy (OSUMCP), violated several provisions of the Controlled Substances Act (CSA). The two pharmacies were unable to account for large quantities of potentially dangerous and addictive drugs that are often abused, including hydrocodone and alprazolam. Cardinal Health Pharmacy Services, LLC, self-reported the losses to the Drug Enforcement Administration and local police.

After receiving the report of the missing drugs, U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration agents from the Drug Diversion Group in Tulsa conducted an investigation and audit which revealed that 399,500 dosage units of hydrocodone and 234,000 dosage units of alprazolam are unaccounted for at HCMP for the time period 10/5/05 through 6/24/07, along with sixty-four (64) controlled substance invoices. At OSUMCP, there were 6,800 dosage units of hydrocodone, 300 dosage units of phentermine and 23,700 dosage units of alprazolam unaccounted for during the time period from 4/4/07 through 7/16/08, in addition to forty-seven (47) controlled substance invoices.

“Prescription drugs are regulated because of their powerful and potentially harmful effects,” Woodward said. “Today’s settlement will help to curb illegal access to these potentially dangerous drugs that are often abused. It demonstrates the important responsibilities that all pharmacies have to prevent controlled drugs from being diverted from their intended use. The Department of Justice and the Drug Enforcement Administration are determined to combat the troubling prescription drug abuse problem in order to protect the public health and keep our communities safe.”

Cardinal Health Pharmacy Services, LLC, denied wrongdoing, attributing the violations to the actions of two rogue employees who stole controlled substances from HMCP and OSUMCP. Upon discovering the thefts, Cardinal Health Pharmacy Services, LLC, immediately terminated the two employees. Cardinal Health Pharmacy Services, LLC, has fully cooperated with the investigation conducted by the DEA. Additionally, Cardinal Health Pharmacy Services, LLC, has implemented revised record keeping and inventory control procedures in a good-faith effort to prevent future violations of the CSA.